

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BANGKO 00454 091108Z

21

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01

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R 091008Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9586

S E C R E T BANGKOK 0454

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S LETTER OF APOLOGY TO THE PRIME MINISTER

1. AMBASSADOR KINTNER WROTE FROM CHIANG MAI A LETTER OF APOLOGY OVER THE SAKON NAKHON INCIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK JANUARY 8. WE DELIVERED THE LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY JANUARY 9 AND LEFT A COPY WITH HIM. HE ASSURED US THAT HE WOULD DELIVER THE ORIGINAL EXPEDITIOUSLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER. HE COMMENTED THAT THE LETTER WAS A SOUND MOVE THAT SHOULD HELP DEFUSE THE SITUATION.

2. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER FOLLOWS:

EXCELLENCY:

IN VIEW OF YOUR HEAVY SCHEDULE BECAUSE OF PRIME MINISTER TANAKA'S VISIT, AND MY OWN ABSENCE FROM BANGKOK ON A VISIT TO CHIANG MAI, I HAVE DECIDED TO WRITE YOU A PERSONAL LETTER RATHER THAN SEEK AN APPOINTMENT TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE SAKON NAKHON LETTER INCIDENT WHICH I FIND PROFOUNDLY TROUBLING.

ALTHOUGH I DID NOT AUTHORIZE THIS PROJECT, AND WOULD NOT HAVE APPROVED IT HAD I BEEN AWARE OF IT, I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT THE UNITED STATES MISSION TO THAILAND DOES. YOU HAVE MY SOLEMN WORD, YOUR EXCELLENCY, THAT I DO

SECRET

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 00454 091108Z

NOT VIEW IT IN THE INTERESTS OF MY GOVERNMENT OR MY MISSION TO

INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF YOUR COUNTRY, AND THAT I AM TAKING STRICT MEASURES TO PREVENT ANY FUTURE INCIDENTS OF THIS NATURE. THE INDIVIDUAL INVOLVED IN THE SAKON NAKHON INCIDENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THAILAND.

BY THE TIME YOU RECEIVE THIS LETTER YOU PROBABLY WILL BE AWARE THAT TODAY I MET WITH REPORTERS IN CHIANG MAI IN A NEWS CONFERENCE THAT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED SEVERAL DAYS AGO. DURING THE CONFERENCE I STATED I HAD ALREADY APOLOGIZED ORALLY TO SEVERAL ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH WHOM I HAVE MET SINCE THE OCCURRENCE OF THIS LAMENTABLE INCIDENT, AND THIS LETTER CONSTITUTES A FORMAL APOLOGY TO YOU.

I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THERE IS MUTUAL ADVANTAGE TO BE DERIVED FROM CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES IN A WIDE VARIETY OF AREAS. I WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE, FOR MY PART, TO ENSURE THAT THIS REGRETTABLE INCIDENT DOES NOT JEOPARDIZE THE EXCELLENT RECORD OF COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

SHOULD YOU WISH, I WOULD OF COURSE BE MOST HAPPY TO MEET PERSONALLY WITH YOU ON JANUARY 11, AFTER I RETURN FROM CHIANG MAI, TO REVIEW THIS INCIDENT AND WHAT I AM DOING TO PREVENT RECURRENCE.

PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, MY APOLOGIES FOR THE EMBARRASSMENT THIS INCIDENT HAS CAUSED YOU.

SINCERELY YOURS,

(SIGNED)

WILLIAM R. KINTNER
AMERICAN AMBASSADOR.

KINTNER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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